

## MEETING RECORD

**NAME OF GROUP:** Urban Design Committee

**DATE, TIME AND**

**PLACE OF MEETING:** Wednesday, March 7, 2001, 3:00 p.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** **Members:** Dennis Scheer, Gordon Scholz, Scott Sullivan, and Third World Oforah

**Others:** Charlie Meyer (Lincoln Pro Baseball); John Sinclair (Sinclair Hille); Ed Zimmer, Mike DeKalb and Missy Minner (Planning Dept.)

**STATED PURPOSE**

**OF THE MEETING:** Regular Meeting of the Urban Design Committee

### **Approval of minutes from February 7, 2001.**

Scholz moved approval of minutes as distributed, seconded by Sullivan. Motion for approval carried 4-0.

### **Special Sign District for "Haymarket Ball Park" area.**

Sinclair explained that the Haymarket Ball Park is a joint partnership between NEBCO, the City of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The special sign district is an overlay to the current I-1 zoning district, in which they are trying to define some special signs that are appropriate to the entertainment atmosphere of the park.

The district is broken into three pieces, the Haymarket Connector, Haymarket Park District, and the Lincoln Baseball District.

The Haymarket Connector signage has to do with the north-south gateways that will happen at the landing points of the overpass. The gateways will be of the same brick and pre-cast concrete as the baseball stadium. Sinclair Hille has been hired to do the connector and DLR Sports in Tampa, Florida and Omaha is doing the baseball stadium.

The second aspect of the connector is at the bridge itself where sign opportunities occur on the keystone element over the two connector bridges. The bridge will be owned and run by the City of Lincoln. At this point in time, there is no intention to put signage on those, however they desire the ability to do so in the future.

The University is pursuing a connector that goes from the south face of the parking garage underneath the overpass across the INS parking lot and lands in the 8<sup>th</sup> Street cul-de-sac, but it is basically an at-grade sidewalk connector. It is a means for University traffic to get to the baseball park.

Dekalb mentioned that the Haymarket connector lands two blocks north of the Haymarket sign district.

Sinclair stated that there are electrical rough-ins on the concrete piers. That will be used if they decide to put signage on them. The flanges, that are up in the air, are perforated metal painted the same color as the

stadium accent color with brushed aluminum inset in the middle. They are lit all the time at night, similar to a beacon or globe on the top of the piers. There is no lighting on the signage right now, since technically there is no signage, but the electrical rough ins are there.

The next area is the Haymarket Park which includes basically four elements specific to the district overlay. There is the entrance ground sign at the ballpark drive entrance. This sign will be a ground lit sign with lights shining on the letters, it will not be internally lit. This sign has not gone into final design stages yet.

Meyer added that there is a proposed water feature at circle drive entrance. At some point they will put some type of a baseball feature there. This also has not entered final design stages. The feature will not be taller than 20 feet.

Meyer added that this probably will not be a major sign, but instead a sculpture, yet they may decide to put some type of plaque there.

DeKalb indicated that this package is an attempt to clarify some of the issues and establish the framework, there would be exemptions for sculptures.

Scheer wanted to make sure that nothing the Urban Design Committee would recommend to approve would preclude them from doing the things they are talking about in terms of water or sculpture if it comes in under the sign package. He doesn't want to restrict them from doing something with public sculpture or art.

Dekalb indicated that they currently are partially in P zoning which has no restrictions on signage. The balance is I-1 zoning which is very open as far as size and height of signs. The district being proposed is tying that all together as a package with a theme. The overlay district could restrict or preclude signs or allow additional signs.

Zimmer commented that the Committee should regard the information on a baseball theme sculpture as for informational purposes only.

Oforah requested that any sculpture of a person should represent the City, unless the person's name is accounted for and it is an actual player in the league. It is important that the sculpture represent the community as a whole.

Sullivan asked if advertising would be allowed on the sculpture. DeKalb indicated that this would be treated as a sculpture, not a sign. He agreed with Zimmer that the Committee would be signing off on this as an example of the treatment that might be there. Meyer added that this will be a main focal point and will be done tastefully. This is not envisioned as an advertising opportunity.

Sinclair stated that the last element is the marquee message center which is a fairly low profile sign. It will little over 20' tall.

Meyer indicated that this 2-sided sign will be primarily for the I-180 traffic. It is unclear how much of a visual you will get from the east side leaving town. People on the pedestrian walk will be able to see this. They don't want something that sticks way up in the air. This is not in the immediate plans. The back side

of the score board will be seen from the Haymarket.

Sullivan pointed out that the Planning Department had a concern with the advertisement portion of the scoreboard. Meyer indicated that the advertisement on those sponsorships would be things within the park.

DeKalb indicated that the Haymarket, DLA, and the University have been opposed to billboards. He had suggested that they not have billboard sized off-premises signs which are currently allowed in both their zoning districts. Typically ball parks come with a lot advertising, but they could keep it below billboard size, with a limit of 300 square feet. Sinclair indicated that they would have no aversion to that language.

Sullivan expressed that his concerns are limited to just the marquee sign that doesn't seem to have the same flavor of the other pieces. Meyer indicated that it will be made to tie into the area. They have told the marquee companies that they want to use the same masonry and color scheme as the rest of the stadium. Sinclair indicated that they could redesign the sign and revise the drawing before this goes to the Planning Commission.

Sullivan also suggested that they also look at a shape that is more consistent with the rest of the signs. He explained that the top back lit panel is against everything being considered in terms of entryway corridors. He can't support this the way it is.

Meyer stated that the reason they felt it is important to have a marquee sign is because of the limited access to the ball park. He appreciates the concerns and input from the Committee, the landscaping they are proposing will enhance the gateway coming into Lincoln.

Sinclair pointed out that this sign will be similar in size and content to the Journal Star sign or the Pershing sign.

Oforah asked if they have done studies on the distraction to motorists with regard to the marquee sign. Meyer indicated that the sign will be seen by people traveling at approximately 45 MPH. The message will read "Game 7:05 tonight," for example. They have not conducted any studies at this point.

Zimmer suggested that the Committee consider that special sign districts can be both more permissive and more restrictive than the underlying zoning. This is neither, it identifies a number of opportunities and provides clarification. Because the underlying zoning allows off-premise billboards within it, they might say as part of the special sign district that they forego the opportunity for off-premise billboards and identify this as the one off-premise sign they want which relates to the I-1 zoning.

Scholz asked how important the marquee sign is. Meyer indicated that it is not huge, but they feel they should have it. While looking at other minor league parks, they all have that marquee sign on their premise. They strongly support what is being done on the gateways. He has given the various information on the signs to Ray Hill and has not heard any opposition.

Scheer appreciates their consideration to the height of the sign. He thinks there is some value to this type of sign because it is an icon that makes this familiar and unique as a minor league ball park. This won't be a bad thing with the sensitivity that has been expressed. This sign serves a purpose to pedestrian traffic. He agrees that there are some issues with it, but he doesn't want it thrown out.

Sullivan suggested that they consider using cut out letters with rear illumination. That would help address the entryway corridor issue and would be an economical way to make that come off as a design piece. The trouble here is that it is represented as a sign rather than an architectural piece.

Sinclair pointed out that all these signs would fall within the I-1 district, they are trying to build a theme with the signage.

Meyer stated that the scoreboard is a major piece of the park. They have incorporated game information and a video screen similar to HuskerVision. With the multi-purpose of this facility, there are a couple nights scheduled for boy-scout and girl-scout sleep overs at the park. They will show them a video after the game. The top of the scoreboard will be interchangeable Saltdogs and Husker team logo signs, with a Haymarket Park logo on the back.

Along the outfield wall there will be 8 5' x 28' tri-action signs with green space every 20-22 feet. This will give this a more professional look and clean up the outfield area.

The other signage opportunities are the corporate patio area in left field and the corporate picnic area in right field. Rather than the tent, they may put a more park-type shelter that will stand up to the winds better. There may be sign opportunities there related to that.

The softball scoreboard will not have video.

They met with DLA about the sign district. They are in favor of the proposal. The North Bottoms Neighborhood president's only concern is the arm along X Street that could have ballpark signage. They are considering making that a 4<sup>th</sup> district to address that concern. DeKalb suggested that another option would be to exclude that spot by stating they won't do anything in that area. That may give the neighborhood more protection and it suggests additional limitations.

Sullivan moved support of the package as shown with a request to see an updated version of the marquee sign. Scholz suggested an amendment to the motion stating that "all of the signs be designed cohesively with attention to detail." Sullivan accepted the amendment. Motion for approval seconded by Scholz.

Motion for approval of the proposed special sign district with the request that all signs be cohesively designed with attention to detail carried 4-0.

#### **Update on Entryway Corridor Design Standards.**

Zimmer indicated that Administration has allowed more time to explore the possibility of a compromise that might bring people together on the concept.

#### **Enersen Urban Design Award discussion.**

Scheer asked if anyone had any suggestions for nominations. There were no suggestions from the members at this point.

It was agreed that it would be beneficial to come up with 4 or 5 possibilities and tour those sites. Scheer

agreed to contact Zimmer to see about getting something scheduled.

**Miscellaneous.**

Sullivan stated that the Committee had gotten a letter from the neighborhood in opposition of the approval of the cell tower in Irvingdale Park. Scheer stated that from an Urban Design standpoint, that is not a bad location.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.